

**Clean Colorado River Alliance
Kick-off Meeting Notes
April 15, 2005
Bullhead City, Arizona**

Attendees

Governor Janet Napolitano
Jack Allen, Havasu National Wildlife Refuge
Dean Barlow, Lake Havasu Parks Board
Susan Craig, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Lori Faeth, Office of the Governor
Gene Fisher, LaPaz County Supervisor
Lisa Force, Grand Canyon Trust
Tom Griffin, Griffin & Associates
Bruce Johnson, Tucson Water
Rick Kotts, Arizona State Parks
Roger S. Manning, Arizona Municipal Water Users Association
Maureen George, Law Offices of Maureen Rose George, Lake Havasu City Attorney
Doug Mellon, Doug Mellon Farms Inc.
Larry Nelson, City of Yuma
Steve Owens, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Gary Pasquinelli, Pasquinelli Produce Co.
Rachel Patterson, Mohave County Department of Public Health
Charles Paradzick, Arizona Game & Fish Department
Robert Shuler, Ryley Carlock & Applewhite for Western Growers Association
Karen Smith, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Jay Spector, Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona
John Sullivan, Salt River Project
Linda Taunt, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Bill Werner, Arizona Department of Water Resources
Bob Whelan, Mayor, Lake Havasu City
David "Sid" Wilson, Central Arizona Project

Welcome and Introductions

Lori Faeth, Policy Advisor Natural Resources, Office of the Governor

- Welcome - thank you for attending
- Meeting purpose - discuss pollutants affecting Colorado River's water quality

Opening Remarks

Steve Owens, Director, ADEQ

- Many issues to deal with along Colorado River - it will take a unified effort to address these problems
- Colorado River has a regional and national significance - need to join forces and partner with surrounding states to effectively clean up and protect

Overview of Colorado River Water Quality Issues

Pollutants of Concern

Karen Smith, Director Water Quality, ADEQ

- Top pollutants impairing Arizona streams - metals, sediment, bacteria, and pesticides
- Lakes impaired due to mercury, pH, ammonia, and dissolved oxygen
- Colorado River impairments - selenium, sediment, boron and pesticides
- Other problems and significant threats along Colorado River - nitrogen (nitrates), chromium, uranium, perchlorate, and bacteria

These pollutants, their sources, and their effects on humans and aquatic life and wildlife were discussed in detail. Karen's presentation can be downloaded on the CCRA home page.

Multiple Species Conservation Plan

Bill Werner, Environmental Program Planner, ADWR

- Multi-species conservation program developed – result of concerns raised on reliability of water and power resources following U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 1994 designation of critical habitat for four endangered fish species
- Aimed at protecting sensitive, threatened and endangered species of fish, wildlife and their habitat
- Will work toward the recovery of listed species through habitat and species conservation and attempt to reduce likelihood of additional species listings under the Endangered Species Act
- The Upper Bill Williams River provides a good habitat model for success

For more information, visit the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program web site at www.lcrmscp.org/ or download Bill's presentation from the CCRA home page.

Current and Future Actions to Address

Karen Smith, Facilitator

David S. "Sid" Wilson, General Manager, Central Arizona Project

- Two kinds of reality for CAP in dealing with water quality issues - factual and perception
- Perception is reality
- Alliance needs to manage both factual reality and perceived reality, have a regional solution, bigger than any one community or water manager can bear, and manage upstream risks
- Both realities need to be considered to deal with water quality issues facing Colorado River

For more information on CAP, visit their web site at www.cap-az.com/.

Bob Whelan, Mayor, Lake Havasu City

- Chair of the Colorado River Regional Sewer Coalition (CRRSCO)
- Formed to provide forum for discussion and study of regional sewer and related issues - involves Indian tribes, cities, towns, counties and political agencies
- Mission - protect and enhance water quality in the area of the Lower Colorado River
- Facilitates agreements among its members for specific projects relating to wastewater or for adoption of policies
- Lower Colorado River watershed study conducted for a true regional solution toward addressing nitrates
- Lake Havasu City successful in hooking up 3,000 homes (\$12,000 per connection) per year to sewer, however, approximately 100 new houses going up per month on septic
- Important to solve problems at their source versus through treatment; it's less expensive and wastes less water

Lisa Force, Director of Government Affairs, Grand Canyon Trust

- Uranium tailings in Moab, Utah - located in the flood plain, 750 feet from the river
- Remediation of Moab uranium mill tailings will include complete removal of tailings and contaminated materials
- Relocated to Crescent Junction, approximately 30 miles northwest of the site
- Off-site disposal - upwards of 8 years and cost \$329 million
- Removal is planned by rail, will begin in 2007 and take 75 to 80 years for site to return to normal state
- Final remediation plan to be completed this summer
- Ammonia is the major contaminant of concern - "roll front" uranium deposits contain a variety of mineral species
- Other potential contaminants – uranium, radon and radium, molybdenum, copper, selenium, vanadium, and arsenic
- Significant risk of uranium entering Colorado River during flood conditions

Bill Werner, Environmental Program Planner, ADWR

- Perchlorate contamination identified in 25 states, including AZ - linked to improper waste disposal and leaks in manufacturing processes
- 1997 - Metropolitan Water District of Southern California traced contamination from Kerr-McGee plant to Las Vegas Wash
- Treated as an unregulated contaminant - no enforceable perchlorate standards
- 1995 - USEPA established provisional reference dose at 4 - 18 ppb
- Health risk assessment under review by National Academy of Sciences
- Enforceable standards expected under the Safe Drinking Water Act in 2007
- Arizona Regulation (ADHS and ADEQ) - health based guidance level of 14 ppb, (lowered from 31.5 ppb in May 2000)
- 1998 - plume mapped and characterized; 1999 - 2003 - plume captured and treatment systems installed on and off-site

- Seep (spring) capture at Las Vegas Wash - surface water diversion and 9 extraction wells; 8 extraction wells installed midway between Kerr-McGee plant and Las Vegas Wash
- Interceptor slurry wall on-site - 1,700' long x 60' deep barrier wall and 22 interceptor wells
- 2004 - biological treatment implemented

Bill's presentation on perchlorate can be downloaded on the CCRA home page.

Call to Alliance

Janet Napolitano, Governor

- Thank you – must fight for quantity but water quality also so important
- Alliance's mission - develop recommendations to deal with water quality pollution affecting Colorado River
- Develop an action plan - outline steps to improve and protect water quality
- May choose to focus on large categories of pollutants - heavy metals - versus specific pollutants - chromium
- Provide list or inventory of concerns/problems for Colorado River, assess or rank list based on risk to determine priority
- Regional recommendations due December 9, 2005
- State is faced with the effects or consequences of pollution sources upstream
- Recommendations/actions group proposes will involve other states taking action
- Incoming Chair for the Western Governor's Association - one session on Colorado River issues
- Governors from other states may designate people to help Alliance
- Next state budget session - sit down with legislators, leadership and staff for Colorado River study session, provide information and education on Colorado River water quality; Governor's Office can facilitate meeting with legislators - a collaborative process
- Facilitator may be hired for future meetings

Outline of Alliance Objectives and Timeline

Lori Faeth, Policy Advisor Natural Resources, Office of the Governor

- Governor's proclamation - address water quality in Colorado River
- Purpose - develop recommendations to address existing water quality problems and regional framework for future water quality protection
- Effectively clean up Colorado River – requires a regional approach involving federal, state, tribal, local governments and other key stakeholders
- Example regional models - Chesapeake Bay, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Great Lakes; expert may come and talk about successes
- Develop recommendations - identifying issues, resource requirements, solutions, and implementation schedule
- Timeline and topics/deliverables for subsequent meetings –
 - Kick-off, April 15
 - Confirm Issues, June 17

- Regional Models, August 19
- Draft Recommendations, October 21
- Final Recommendations, December 9
- Goal - ensure Colorado River water quality addresses needs of Arizona, now and in future; key - get everyone involved; strategy - regional framework, solutions, and implementation

Call to the public

No public present

Adjourn